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565

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, GUATEMALA

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
NOV 16 1953

DATE: November 6, 1953

NOV 9 1953

REF :

For Dept. Use Only	ACTION REC'D	DEPT.	OTHER
67	AMA-4	[illegible]	[illegible]

SUBJECT: Former Guatemalan Leftist Politician Sees Arbenz Administration Losing Popular Support.

714.00/11-653

There is enclosed a memorandum of conversation between a member of the Embassy staff and Sr. Augusto MULET-DESCAMPS, former member of the Executive Committee of the Partido Acción Revolucionaria, who said that his recent contacts with non-Communist Administration politicians and Army officers had shown them to be perturbed about the present "control" of the government by Communist elements and about signs that the Administration is losing popular support.

Sr. Mulet-Descamps, a non-Communist who left the PAR last year, is in a good position to sense the feelings of Administration politicians, with whom he has been associated since 1944 and with many of whom he still maintains friendly personal contacts. He is currently the Agence France Presse correspondent and runs a bicycle shop.

The Embassy's observation, as previously reported, is that there is indeed a growing restlessness among non-Communist Administration politicians as Communist influence over the government is extended, but that this is thus far more the result of a clash of practical political interests, such as patronage and the popularity of the regime, than of any crystallized leftist anti-Communist sentiment.

FOR THE AMBASSADOR

William L. Krieg
Counselor of Embassy.

JCHill:cs

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Desp. No.
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Encl. No. 1
Desp. No. 400
From Guatemala

TO : The Ambassador, Col. McCormick, Col. Martin

November 4, 1953

FROM : Harold E. Urist

SUBJECT: Conversation with Sr. Augusto MULET DESCAMPS, Correspondent for Agence France-Presse

Yesterday I visited the office of Sr. Augusto MULET-DESCAMPS, correspondent for Agence France-Presse (AFP) and a former member of the PAR Party. Speaking of some of his friends in the Government whom he has known intimately for many years, Sr. Mulet-Descamps said that Minister OSEGUEDA and other non-Communist "sincere public employees" are extremely perturbed about the present Government control by Communist elements and the increase in opposition among Guatemalans in general, an opposition which is not confined to the so-called "reactionary" groups but is becoming increasingly evident among the middle and lower classes. He said that the Fair has been a manifestation, not a cause, of the existing discontent among Guatemalans of all sectors.

Sr. Mulet-Descamps said that many of his officer friends in the Army are actually frightened by the situation because they feel there is decreasing "popular" support of the Administration and because they are alarmed by the U.S. disapproval of and opposition to the present regime. In this connection he spoke of the difficulty in obtaining arms, which had even affected him personally. As official representative in Guatemala for Colt, Sr. Mulet-Descamps said, he has not even been able to obtain sights "because Washington will not approve the shipment."

On the subject of Communist leaders, Sr. Mulet-Descamps said there were not ten sincere Communists in all of Guatemala. He cited the case of his "good friend and poker pal," José Manuel FORTUNY, Secretary General of the Communist Party, who had to "break" a Q100 bill in order to enter a game recently.

Copies:
Col. McCormick, Col. Martin

HEUrist:tel

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